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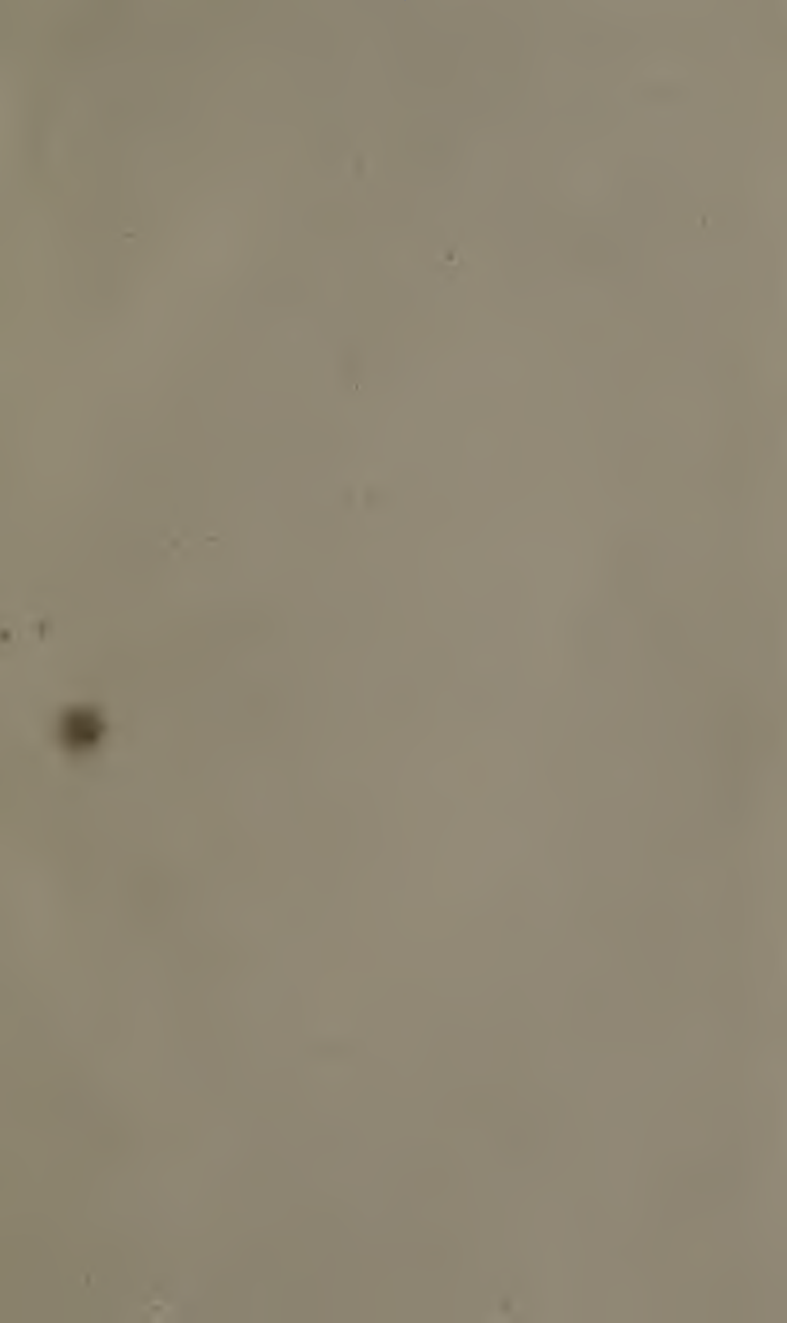


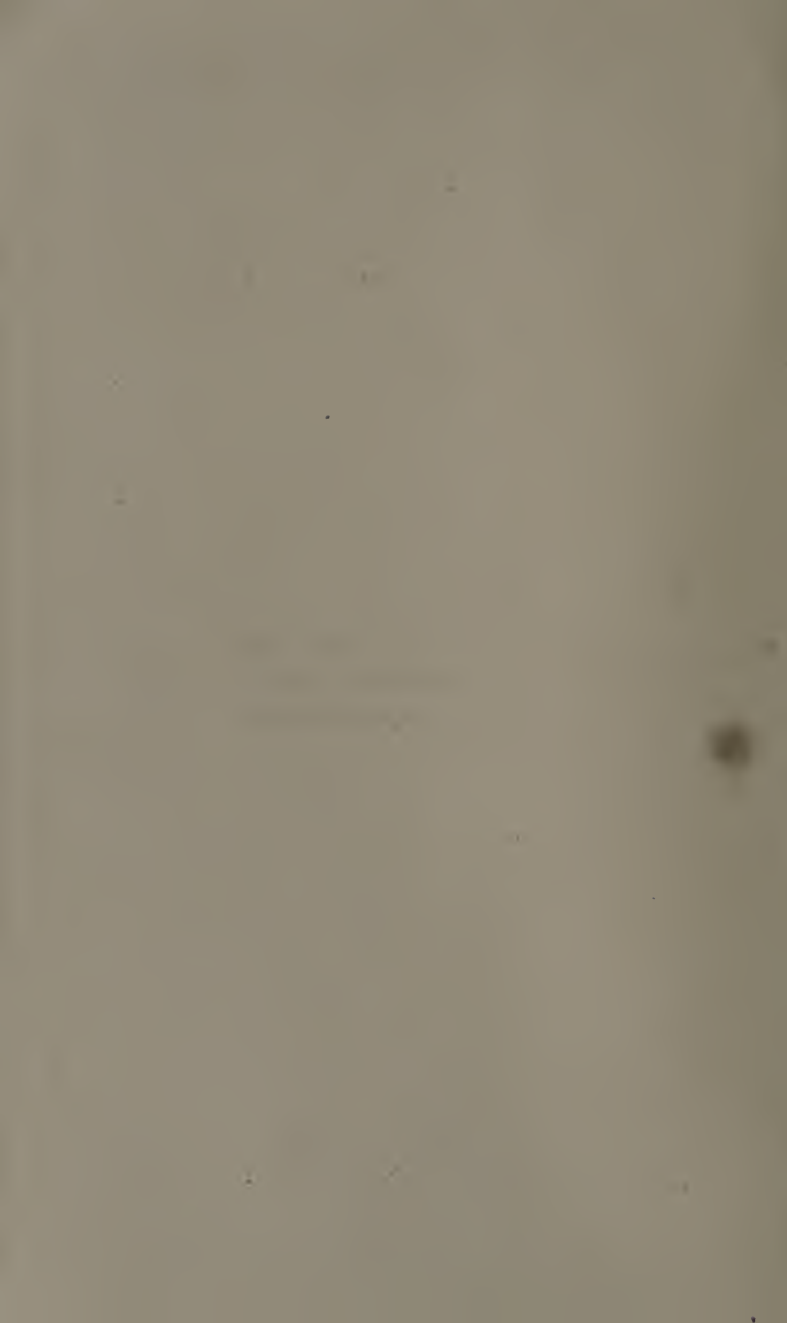
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*History of the
GOLDEN AGE
A Translation by the
33 MARRIS STEPHENSON.*



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“Deeds are done on earth, which
“have their punishment ere the
“earth closes upon the perpetrators.”

To his Grace and Editor
with the fond love of the
Author -

Samuel Johnson

JASON
OF THE
GOLDEN FLEECE

A Cornish Idyl of To-day.

A THREE VOLUME NOVEL IN VERSE.



—BY—

MANNERS STEPHENSON,

AUTHOR OF

“PERSONALTY, ONE MILLION,” “A WAIF,” AND
OTHER POEMS.

LONDON :
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1895.

LOAN STACK

JASON OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE

CANTO I.

TAY! gallant youth, I pray thee, stay!
Nor venture near that stream;
Thy heart will surely rue this day,
Dispelling love's young dream.

Fly! gentle maiden, fly! I pray,
Pause not for one fond look;
Keep not thy wonted tryst to-day,
Nor linger near that brook.

They were indeed a comely pair,
As ever sun shone on;
He stalwart, young and débonnaire,
She graceful as the swan.

Now draw they near the waterfall,
And each a moment stands;
He midst his pine trees, straight and tall,
She on the Abbey lands.

She the rich Banker's only child,
Endowed with each true grace ;
The father's pride seems reconciled,
In that sweet mother's face.

Long had that loving mother slept,
Beneath the sculptured urn ;
From childhood still that daughter wept,
Her mother's non-return,

Ten fleeting years they loved, as one,
Till death tore them apart,
And left the weeping child, alone,
With well nigh broken heart.

'Twas then young Harold came to chase
Her bitter grief away,
And Alice learned to love the face,
That cheered her, day by day.

Thus oft it is sweet pity grows,
From sympathy to love ;
Till each fond heart, that rapture knows,
All earthly joys above.

His was the eloquence of looks,
Words were oft-times but few ;
Nor culled from the great world of books,
But simple, earnest, true.

Noble the race from which he sprang,
Its sole survivor, he ;
On Crécy's field the name once rang,
In pride of chivalry.

Proudly his castle crowns the hill,
Whilst o'er its ancient walls,
The banner is seen floating still,
Ready when duty calls.

He boasted neither wealth nor fame,
A proud unsullied crest,
Together with a knightly name,
Was all he now possessed.

His ancestors, for ages past,
Were ever leal and true ;
With " God and King " their lot was cast,
Their watchword " Through and through."

And thrice had princely suitors found,
Brides in that loyal race ;
Whilst Arthur, of the table round,
There rested from the chase.

Foremost of Saxons, too, they strode,
On Hasting's fateful day ;
When their best blood with Norman flowed,
As it has flowed for aye.

In Egypt Harold fleshed his sword,
Nor shed his blood in vain ;
Before him flew the rebel horde,
On Tel-el-Kebir's plain.

The Banker's fame touched each great mart,
His riches seemed untold ;
They said he never had a heart,
Nor worshipped aught but gold.

No enterprise of any note,
Though success is assured,
Will financiers care to promote,
Unless his name's secured.

Society of him knew naught,
Save as a potent name ;
With mystery his birth was fraught,
Since none knew whence he came.

In city bank of great renown,
His early days were passed.
And there, when it became his own,
His great wealth was amassed.

Fortune, twin sister of mischance,
So often on him smiled ;
'Twas thought the Banker's ardent glance
The Goddess had beguiled.

And well he knew the power of wealth,
 Though naught of love divine ;
For whilst he had the gift of health,
 He felt not, "Lord ! 'tis thine."

Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three,
 The good, the brave, the true,
Are attributes you rarely see
 In the rich parvenu.

Harold is dreaming of the past,
 Joys that come not again ;
Delights far too intense to last,
 Well-nigh akin to pain.

Alice can only think of life
 Bereft of Harold's love ;
A broken-hearted maid, or wife,
 Like death unmated dove.

But why this grief, this deep despair,
 Writ plainly on each brow ?
The father bids his child prepare
 To greet a suitor now !

As dimly burns the vital spark
 When life is well-nigh spent ;
As feebly sings the soaring lark,
 Ere pausing for descent.

Dimly and feebly burns the flame,
Banker, in that breast of thine:
Unworthy quite the hallowed name
Of parental love divine.

Long had she learned to dread this day,
And now that it had come:
Her sire had bartered her away,
To grace a ducal home.

One of the richest in the land,
With title of "Your Grace,"
Sought to possess her fair young hand,
Enamoured of her face.

This Duke, of a right royal vein,
Was unlike those great men
Who, when the sword is resting, deign
To wield a mighty pen.

No wish had he to rule the State,
Ambition's highest prize:
Such cares to those he'd relegate,
Who seek thereby to rise.

His Grace was cultured, handsome, brave,
His intellect most keen:
Noble his bearing, courtly, grave,
Fit mate for any queen.

But oft in Nature, as in Art,
After infinite toil,
A work that should true fame impart,
An envious flaw will spoil.

And this Duke's heart was stern and cold,
Proving the rule, we think :
The strongest cable can but hold,
Upon its weakest link.

Born into almost regal state,
Free from each sordid care ;
Since Nature meant him to be great,
Why was not greatness there ?

Whilst still a boy in years, he saw
Wealth will life's prizes gain,
Though want can only hope to draw
Its legacy of pain.

With the young intellect thus tied
To narrow thoughts of pelf,
The heart's best aspirations died,
Worshipping fetish "Self."

'Twas thus when came the trying hour ;
Called early to command
Estates of vast extent and power,
The richest in the land.

Whilst yet no more than a mere youth.
His mind, taking that bent,
Would dwell far less on heavenly truth
Than royalties and rent,

Until, love's heat no longer felt,
The heart grows icy cold,
Which now, 'tis said, would only melt
In streams of molten gold.

The flush of youth already past,
His Grace will now decide,
To add to his possessions vast
A young and lovely bride.

He first saw Alice—yet a child,
Bend o'er our good Queen's hand;
Well pleased to hear his sweet charge styled
“The fairest in the land.”

Her sire and he oft met in trade,
As giants of finance;
And thus the Duke “presents” the maid
Her prestige to enhance.

“Harold, my first and dearest friend,
My father writes at last;
Girlhood's sweet days are at an end,
Probation now is past.”

“To-morrow will he leave the town,
At home, to rest awhile;
He bids me don my latest gown
And meet him with a smile.”

“Informing me, that not alone
He comes to take the air;
A suitor brings he, not unknown,
Rich, wise and passing fair.”

“Ah! well I know him, Harold dear,
And well my heart he knows;
No love-making have I to fear,
To add to all my woes.”

“Great Jove himself was not more proud,
Though to the Gods a God;
His smile dispels not sorrow’s cloud,
Earth blooms not where he trod.”

“Nestor himself was not more wise,
Nor Mars ever more bold;
No marble did old Greece devise
More noble or more cold.”

In this wise wrote the gentle maid,
Her sad news to impart;
Intent, although crushed and dismayed,
To hide her bleeding heart.

Astir betimes, Alice beheld
The day in beauty grow;
Sol's first pale rays, the mist dispelled,
Soon take a brighter glow.

Until by gilding leaf and spray
Each dew-drop seems a gem;
Whilst earth joins by a golden ray
The new Jerusalem.

Returning from her wonted stroll
Within the Abbey grounds,
She sees the rustic postman droll
Call on his morning rounds.

Whose ludicrous, good-humoured face,
Despite the news he brings,
We welcome with a better grace
Than far less homely things.

Thus wingless Mercury, the post,
Halts at the Abbey gate,
Big with the ever-changing host
Of missives full of fate.

Naught of their qualities he knows,
Nor yet unwisely heeds,
As daily o'er the land he sows
Thought's fructifying seeds.

Nor knows he now the blow he deals,
So innocent the guise,
In which fell mischief oft conceals
Itself from human eyes.

For will not draughts of sparkling wine,
Unlock the door to shame,
And vice, in aspect most benign,
Man's nature soon defame?

Contagion in love's holy kiss,
Death in the flowing bowl,
Malaria in realms of bliss,
And lust that kills the soul!

In outward semblance only please,
Despite their Dead Sea fruit.
And prove man, in such things as these,
No wiser than the brute.

Mischance's advent, who foretell,
Or say, whence evil comes?
Since vainly we essay to spell,
Past "pricking of the thumbs."

And that morn the sun arose,
In mid-summer splendour,
Waking the earth from its repose,
With smiles bright and tender.

Thus nature seems at times to mock
Weak mortals' petty ways,
Smiles at the battle's direst shock,
Frowns on our gala days.

Those occult forces which men call
Nature, would seem to move
Apart from Him who orders all
In mercy and in love !

Save One ! no sage on earth hath trod,
That understood those laws ;
" From nature up to nature's God,
" Effect controlling cause."

True men have dug in mines of thought,
In this and ages past,
But none have reached the truths they sought
Spite of their labours vast.

The most profound have wrought in vain,
Thinking they held the clue,
Forging fresh links in error's chain,
Mistaking false for true.

And on that memorable morn,
Earth wore her sweetest smile,
Even the abject and forlorn,
Seemed brighter, for awhile !

Yet none could guess what might not hide,
 Within that bloated pouch,
What cause for joy or grief abide,
 The shrewdest dare not vouch.

A maid of all work's horrid scrawl,
 Lawyers' bills of charges ;
This dainty note speaks fashions drawl,
 This, love's grief enlarges !

A cooling lover writes at last,
 A daughter's weekly note,
A son repents of errors past,
 This "party" begs a vote.

Here is a list of good Rhine wine !
 There is a mourning card !
That letter must have crossed the line !
 This comes from Scotland yard !

A Mortgagee would here foreclose !
 There's an invitation !
This writer wishes to propose !
 That, a situation !

Paris fashions from Madame Blank,
 Here's news from one thought dead ;
This shows the balance in the bank :
 A widow wanting bread !

This comes from Afric's burning shore,
Telling a sorry tale—
An errant son, now smitten sore,
Is passing through the veil !

But this is from the Holy Land :
A daughter's light divine
Impelled her join a Christian band,
To visit Palestine.

Our Bishop's charge, this needs must be,
Here is true afflatus ;
Were his clerics as good as he,
Soon they'd regulate us.

A quack declares he cures all ills
That mortal man endures ;
As none can say he ever kills,
What if he never cures ?

This is the mixture day by day.
Costly silk, filthy rag,
Pearl of great price, and worthless clay,
Mix in the postman's bag.

The Abbey's ancient servitor,
The butler, bailiff, clerk,
Received like a true janitor
The mail without remark.

Then, acting as secretary,
He looks the letters o'er ;
Hastening to the library,
Meets Alice at the door.

'Twas then that in her hands he placed
Her Father's cruel note,
Knowing full well the crest that graced
The master hand that wrote.

And now, like one whose eager haste
Has robbed him of his breath,
Yet fears the precious time to waste
In case of life and death,

I dread to pass that half-closed door,
Or penetrate the room
Where Alice, kneeling on the floor,
Is sunk in mental gloom.

Her lips, compressed, emit no sound,
Clasped though her hands in prayer ;
Unseeing, her eyes pierce the ground ;
Deep, deep, is her despair !

How long her heart could bear such grief
'Twere futile to surmise,
Since sympathy soon brings relief
In most familiar guise.

Bounding across the well-kept lawn,
Discarding beaten track,
For, bold as lion, fleet as fawn,
None dared to keep him back.

Then darting through the Abbey door,
Which for him opens wide,
Searches each room and passage o'er,
Until he gains her side.

Checking his fiery ardour now,
In presence of such grief,
He knows it! though we know not how!
He covers like a thief.

But with instinct scarce paralleled,
He quickly understands;
Such grief must promptly be dispelled,
Thrusts his nose 'twixt her hands.

Of sympathy, this touching proof,
Bursts the floodgates of woe:
Forcing despair to stand aloof,
Bids tears of healing flow.

And long they welled from sorrow's spring,
Long her breast heaved deep sighs,
Ere blessed sympathy could bring
Love's light back to those eyes.

But as the sun, rising midst rain,
Chases the clouds away;
When earth, refreshed, smiles once again
Unto the perfect day.

Alice's tears will cease to flow,
When o'er her soul, like bahn,
Shall spread that peace the righteous know—
Religion's holy calm.

But who is this that dares intrude
Upon so sad a scene,
And ventures such attentions rude,
Where grief would hide unseen ?

His name, an heritage of Greece,
Sung by immortal bard,
'Tis "Jason of the Golden Fleece,"
Harold's brave body guard !

A staghound of that noble strain
The faithful Gelert claimed,
Whose tawny hide, in sportive vein,
Appropriately named.

O'er her fair face now flits a smile,
Faint as Sol's primal beam,
Which Jason, watching her the while,
Regards as hope's bright gleam.

When he, no more by grief restrained,
Asserts himself again,
And rests not till he has obtained
The token sought in vain.

For Alice, thinking still of naught,
Save loveless future days,
Fails to remark the meaning fraught
In the hound's noisy ways.

Rising at last from off her knees,
She spies her father's note,
Which, as the hound in play would seize,
She, fondly clasps his throat.

This simple act at once reveals
What Jason's antics meant,
For on his collar Alice feels
A note, her lover's sent.

How frequently by accident
Discoveries are made,
Is constantly proved evident
In science, art, and trade!

This talent of their canine friend
Was thus revealed by chance,
When Harold wished one day to send
Some gloves just brought from France.

Returning from abroad at night,
Too late for making calls,
He next day, rising with the light,
Strolls by the Abbey walls.

Impatient that his lady fair
Should know of his return,
He chafes to find no servants there
From whom the news she'd learn.

Climbing the castle hill again,
With Jason by his side,
Dreaming of joys he will attain
When Alice is his bride.

He whispers, as fond lovers will,
Deem not the habit weak!
'That cherished name the heart doth fill,
Our lips are fain to speak!

Meanwhile, the hound, now restive grown,
Watches his master's face,
And barks, with meaning in his tone,
To prove his no "dumb" race.

Too much we hear of man's "dumb" friends,
Why traduce them that way?
When 'tis our ignorance offends,
Not knowing what they say!

Byron himself the keynote strikes,
Tuneful tribute paying;
To that deep voice the thief dislikes
Watch-dog's "welcome" baying.

A thousand voices daily claim
Calm investigation;
But pride of race still blunts the aim
Bent on their translation.

Fruitlessly wasting midnight oil
On presumptuous labours,
Man yet begrudges such sweet toil
That might bless his neighbours.

Pythagoras return again,
A better creed to teach;
Not that beasts have the souls of men
But may have parts of speech!

Who that in wilderness remote
The lion's roar has heard?
Who that by dying swan's last note
Has felt his bosom stirred?

Would dare assert, he did not know
That magic influence,
Which nature can on sound bestow,
Teeming with eloquence!

Didst thou not see that mute appeal,
 In sorrow's tearful eye?
Then never whilst thy heart can feel.
 Its influence deny!

Silence, that golden attribute,
 Antithesis of sound,
Teems, like the voice of bird and brute.
 With eloquence profound!

The lightning's silent tongue, too, tells
 The secrets of the air;
When thunder cloud on cloud dispels
 The forces garnered there.

Whilst even the deaf mutes command
 Speech that is named their own;
That fluent language of the hand,
 Expressive without tone:

A look, a gesture, oft will move
 The heart with joy or pain,
When sounding words of hate or love
 Fall on the ear in vain.

The outstretched arms, the hands compressed,
 Tell surely their own tale,
And thought by motion is expressed,
 When language can but fail.

No wonder that the great Carlisle
Mere windy talk should hate,
Dreading to see our favoured isle
A victim to debate.

Talk from St. Stephen's to St. Paul's
Wild seas of talk, ill thought ;
Talk from St. James' to those walls
Where "Guardians" oft have fought.

Talk in the forum and the mart,
On all things, new and strange ;
Pretentious talk that injures art,
And endless "talk on 'Change."

Then tardy justice let us pay
Those speechless friends of man,
And try, when they have aught to say,
If understand we can.

Their language we may choose to slight,
Yet still in wordless ways,
Lessons they teach, which, read aright,
Should earn them better days.

Laconia, thy charms were few,
Nor those our hearts engage ;
Thine ancient wisdom still holds true,
In hating verbiage.

No longer let us pride ourselves
Upon our prating powers ;
The soul's best friends adorn those shelves—
Friends of our silent hours !

Now Harold never seemed to guess
What Jason would convey,
Until the hound, in its distress,
Refused him right of way.

Down, Jason ! down ! the young man cried,
Raising on high his cane,
Thinking to waive the dog aside ;
But menace proved in vain.

As Jason still would hold his ground,
Spite of the threatened blow,
Harold, to humour him, turned round,
Feigning down hill to go.

Nor yet did this serve to explain
The hound's demonstration,
Seeing he soon renewed again
His strange agitation.

At last ! the Master understands,
The gloves his lips have pressed :
The dog has seen on those dear hands
Which oft its head caressed,

For Alice, Jason greatly loves,
And when he chanced to see
In Harold's hands the well known gloves,
They fired his ecstasy.

Since Alice oft-times stationed him
To ward from passing harm
The goody basket, 'twas her whim
To carry on her arm.

Perchance for the sick room, sweet flowers,
For aged dame, choice tea,
A book for winter's evening hours,
A childhood's A B C.

A very Lady Bountiful,
The dear maid long had been ;
Wherever hearts were sorrowful,
Her sweet face soon was seen.

The fast declining patriarch,
The tottering old maid,
Those scholars who have made their mark,
For each kind words are said.

Advice and counsel gives she all,
Direct from " God's own book,"
Helping to rise, saving from fall,
Souls strengthened by a look.

For virtue's own intrinsic power
Has not yet wholly fled,
Though clouds of scepticism lower,
Threat'ningly overhead.

That subtle influence of mind,
And, attribute most rare,
With purity of soul combined,
All felt when she was there.

No wonder then, as we have said,
Seeing those gloves once more,
Which oft were in that basket laid,
He'd take them to her door.

Now Harold understands at last,
A sense of shame he feels,
Knowing the blame on Jason cast,
Despite his strong appeals.

But soldier instincts were to blame,
For strict was he to rule :
Obedience, that sacred name,
In military school.

Obedience, in man and beast,
On every side he saw,
The great ones governed like the least,
By order and by law.

The poor mechanic in his shed,
The king upon his throne,
The earth beneath, the sky o'erhead,
Obedience must own.

Kings, to laws international,
Not easy to define ;
Creation, to laws rational,
All, to the law divine.

And Jason's forte had ever been,
Perfect obedience ;
Which Harold loves, as we have seen,
In its true higher sense.

Blaming himself for want of thought,
In judging such a friend,
He grants him now the favour sought :
The parcel will he send.

Quickly the gloves, for his fair one,
He from his pocket draws,
And with the old pair tied thereon,
Trusts them to Jason's jaws.

Like steed that long has pawed the ground,
Impatient for the course,
Or fabled beast brave Persus found,
Bellerophon's winged horse.

Swift as the eagle on the wing,
Strikes the flying quarry ;
Fleet as the wolf when ravening,
In mid-winter foray.

Swift as the arrow from the bow,
By brawny arm pulled taught ;
Fleet as the wind when tempests blow :
Almost as quick as thought,

Darts Jason down the castle hill,
His haste by love inspired ;
While clouds of dust the track doth fill,
As though the road he fired.

Now draws he near the Abbey brook,
Nor halts to choose the ground ;
A single glance perchance he took,
Then cleared it at a bound.

Soon the great oaken door he gains,
But no one finds he there ;
For silence o'er the Abbey reigns,
Silence everywhere.

Save when the clock with solemn pace,
Ticks off the flight of time :
Admonishing our fallen race,
Hour to hour, prime to prime.

Though Jason was not long delayed,
For soon pricks he his ears,
A friend with whom he oft has strayed
Upon the scene appears.

In yonder upper window pane
A smiling face is seen,
One the hound gladly sees again—
The page boy, Proudly Greene.

And Proudly Greene is a merry wight,
Brimful of life and fun,
His sire, a grenadier of might,
Famous with sword and gun.

Cast in an herculean mould
Was Serjeant-Major Greene,
As brave as any knight of old,
As faithful to his Queen.

In contrast to his size immense,
He's modest, gentle, mild,
And though not lacking common sense,
As simple as a child.

Though in the serried ranks of war,
When Cornish blood mounts high;
His sword, like old Excalibar,
Smites foemen hip and thigh.

You've heard how by Red River's tide,
Acting as pioneer,
His young subaltern by his side,
The weary men to cheer.

Young Greene, then only Private Joe,
Spying an ambushade,
Hewed trees, that falling crushed the foe
That there in ambush laid ?

Or how in far-off Zululand
His V.C. was well won,
Saving a gallant little band,
Nor lost a single one ?

A pretty chap was little Greene
When home his Father came,
And marched him round the castle green.
'Twas then he gained his name.

His the bright eyes now looking out,
Wondering what could cause
His friend to be so soon about;
"What is that in his jaws?"

Softly the window opens he,
Not to disturb the house;
Calls "Jason, old boy, wait for me!"
Steals downstairs like a mouse.

Not the stairs Cromwell's Roundheads trod,
Iconoclasts whose zeal;
Degraded art, not pleasing God,
Whose works true art reveal.

But those the servants always use,
Which lead by quiet ways,
To kitchens, cellars, gardens, mews,
Built in these latter days.

Down to the outer gate he hies,
Quickly the bolt withdraws,
Raising the latch, in Jason flies,
The door forced by his paws.

To be thus treated by a friend,
Seemed certainly a shame,
But Jason meant not to offend,
Haste was alone to blame,

For shooting now through both the yards,
Straight to the service door,
He ceremony quite discards
And seeks the second floor.

Where, in a sunny corner snug,
My lady's bower is found ;
And here, his parcel on the rug,
Couches the faithful hound,

Nor had he very long to wait,
 Since soon there came a maid,
So fresh, so neat, yet so sedate,
 So pretty, yet so staid.

Whose maid she is, one need not ask,
 A single glance will tell ;
To train a maid, no heedless task,
 One must be trained as well.

No mistress in that county side,
 Could vie with Alice here ;
Her servants were known far and wide,
 Though ruled by love, not fear.

This maid now stooping to caress,
 The dog's rough tawny hide,
Seeing the parcel's brief address,
 Knows why he there doth bide ;

So tapping softly at the door,
 Waits but to hear a call ;
When, silence reigning as before,
 Enters, dog, gloves and all.

For Alice never slept in ward,
 Locked up like miser's pelf,
She knew that virtue's best safeguard
 Is ever virtue's self.

Truly it was a pleasant sight,
The hound's wild joy to see,
Subdued by hand, so small and white,
To mute docility :

For Jason would not move a limb,
If Alice said him nay,
So great her mast'ry over him,
So apt he to obey.

She greets with loving words her pet,
And strokes his noble head,
Directs her maid some milk to get.
And place it near the bed.

With woman's quick instinctive sense,
Alice sees at a glance
Her lover's innocent pretence,
Heralds return from France :

So taking from its resting place,
The little riding switch
She won from Harold in a race,
Mounted on "Water Witch."

She calls the dog, and in his mouth,
Placing the well known cane,
Waves her fair arm towards the south,
And hies him home again.

Soon at his gallant master's feet
The trophy Jason lays ;
And thus it chanced in labours sweet
He now spends many days.

So fleet of foot, so deft was he,
So cunning he became,
That people travelled far to see
This dog of classic name.

Coming, in customary course,
Upon this dreadful day,
Jason, with sympathy, would force
Alice's grief away.

But she, dear maid, was sore distrest,
At first stunned by the blow ;
Sorrow now rends her gentle breast,
Whilst tears in plenty flow.

Finding at last her lover's note,
A smile breaks through her tears,
And hope, revived by what he wrote,
Now chides her for her fears.

For no chill moralist was he,
But one whose manly tones
Preached more, in true sincerity,
Than worlds of sighs and moans.

Some minds are naturally strong,
 With innate vigour blest,
And seem to more than men belong—
 Governing all the rest.

Harold, by Nature thus endowed,
 Was of that favoured few,
Singled from out the common crowd,
 Heroic deeds to do.

True, he yet lacks that sacred fire
 Which from Olympus came ;
Prometheus stole—Art to inspire—
 Enthusiasm's flame.

For what were Love, Religion, Art,
 Without its heat and light ?
E'en Science would have borne no part
 In making life more bright.

The Hellespontine lover's name,
 Martin Luther's story,
Palissy's almost tragic fame,
 Edison's bright glory,

In point of fact had never been
 But for that magic power ;
And no grand name the world has seen
 Had lived beyond its hour.

Thus, in some mysterious way,
Yet no uncertain plan,
There comes the trying hour some day—
God has prepared the man!

From Noah, Moses, bold St. John,
Ordained in Bible times,
To that brave soul so lately gone,*
All ages and all times.

Heroic men have run their course,
Played their appointed parts;
Their strength, enthusiasm's force;
Their arms, its fervid darts!

No flower that his garden holds
Escapes the Master's eye,
Though oft its loveliness unfolds
In safe obscurity.

Surely the boskage some must hide,
But such are spared that light,
Shed by fame, on every side,
Of those who reach her height.

That which some men call chance, some fate,
His opportunity!
May never come, or come too late;
Blameless immunity!

* Gordon.

For only fools would try to force
The time's pre-destined pace,
Whilst knaves alone will have recourse
To tricks to win life's race.

Harold, for any fortune fit,
Trained to use head and hand,
Brain ever clear, sinews well knit ;
A soul born to command.

Past master in all manly sports,
Like Centaur rides his horse,
Receiving guests, or storming forts,
As brimful of resource.

Whilst hand-in-hand in deadly fray
He fights to win or die,
As heroes in the olden day,
Gained immortality.

Then, should the hour of trial come,
Let it come how it will !
With pipe of peace, or roll of drum,
Such shall prove victors still !

Meanwhile time pressed, and the hound
No more delay will brook,
But echo wakes, with cheerful sound,
Within that ancient nook.

Solaced now by her lover's note.

Relieved by tears, her mind,
Beneath the cruel rod that smote,
Alice will comfort find.

"Jason! friend Jason! waits dear maid!"
The dog would seem to say,
Whilst Alice binds some flowers with braid,
To speed him on his way.

Then first from the fresh-filled epergne
A passion flower withdrawn,
The myrtle next can we discern,
With monkshood, root of scorn.

To these, verbena's modest bloom,
Thoughtfully added she,
With "faith and love," now "danger's loom."
I bid thee "pray for me!"

This the message, the symbols those,
Now only lovers heed;
Such tender meanings, they suppose,
No other mortals need.

When art was young, in days of old,
Men oft such means would use,
To send their greetings, kind and bold,
Or spread portentous news!

The hound now gone, Alice must face,
Resignedly, her fate,
And meekly breathes a prayer for grace
With fortitude to wait.

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

CANTO II.

FROM beaten track my muse has strayed,
Like one who wanders free,
Where nature hath her charms displayed
With prodigality.

Then, back to that sweet waterfall
We must return once more,
Beneath the pine trees, straight and tall,
Where silver streamlets pour.

Alice yet lingers by the well,
Her face now calm, though pale;
How deep her sorrow, none may tell,
None guess her mournful tale.

Whilst he, the cause of her fond grief,
Seems rooted to the ground;
His mind as yet denied relief,
No comfort has it found.

Of what he thinks is quickly told
By glancing at his brow—
Now flushed and hot, then white and cold;
Sternly contracted now!

Indignant that the Banker should
Ignore his prior claim,
And sell his daughter, pure and good,
To buy posthumous fame.

But he will beard him in his den,
Constrain him, hear his suit;
Maintain himself, 'gainst other men,
In honour and repute!

Then, should his cold heart not relent,
To Alice will he fly,
For she, he knows, will not repent,
But keep her troth, or die.

Could he though act so mean a part,
Condemn her to remain,
Because she hath a faithful heart,
Like Gyneth of Triermain?

No! he would go to her this day,
Release her promised hand;
He dare not let her throw away
All that might make life grand!

And that, too, for his humble lot,
An honoured name, 'tis true;
Far better he should be forgot
Than such a loss ensue.

Harold, you see, had passed that age
When sentiment still guides,
Having just reached that second stage,
When intellect decides.

Nature, to man—in this most kind—
Developes by degrees,
The boy's, the man's, the master mind,
The changes being these—

The boy will long for comeliness,
Strength with dexterity;
The man despise not homeliness,
If he's prosperity.

But when, with time, our wants decrease,
No more we crave for wealth;
Age only needs a mind at peace,
And for the body health!

Yes! he must live, unloved, alone,
Never again to press
Her loving lips against his own,
In innocent caress.

No more to whisper in her ear
All that a fond heart tells,
No more to hear responses dear
Sweeter than silver bells.

To be alone! to live unloved!
Perchance, in after years,
His tale of sorrow, all unmoved,
Fall on forgetful ears!

But now, with heart-sick wilfulness,
Resolved is he to go
And spend his life in changefulness;
Wanderings to and fro.

To join some great commander's camp;
Would there had been a war!
'Twould light enthusiasm's lamp
And help dull time to mar.

Or any enterprise that's fraught
With danger or great toil;
For rarely can the mind distraught,
Turn to the midnight oil.

Though oft engrossing study brings
Calm to the troubled breast,
When in the mind there once upsprings
A living interest.

Swift thought, outvieing lightning's speed,
Clogs not the wheels of time;
Nor Harold's musings long impede
His flight to foreign clime.

He knew not Alice lingered near,
Nor knew she he was nigh;
To meet her his brave heart had fear,
Yet longed to say "good-bye."

But, ere he goes, one look he takes
Upon the scene below;
Truly, the grand old abbey makes
A very goodly show!

The Tor on which the young man stands,
This side the castle hill,
A glorious prospect here commands,
The artist eye to fill.

Far as his eye can see, the waves,
With full Atlantic roll,
Break o'er the rocks and flood the caves,
To us their seeming goal.

'Gainst frowning cliffs, on sandy dunes,
The sea, harmonious, breaks,
Like instrument of many tunes
Some skilful hand awakes.

The deep blue sea, the changeful sky,
The many coloured shore;
The busy shipping flitting by,
The sea birds skimming o'er.

The breezy downs you there behold,
Crowning the sterile rocks,
With robes of purple, green, and gold,
All pied with fleecy flocks.

Whilst in mid-distance calmly stands
That erstwhile hallowed fane,
Surrounded by its pleasant lands,
An almost level plain.

Save where the river's ancient course,
In pre-historic days,
Had worn, with its resistless force,
The vale where now it lays.

But where we stand you fail to see
Its source, the waterfall,
As, hid by leafy canopy,
You hear its pleasant brawl.

Beneath the laurels, bright and dank,
With never-ceasing spray,
O'er stony bed, by rocky bank,
It tears to open day.

Under our very feet they lie,
Fairer than poet's dream;
All rivals they can well defy—
That valley and the stream!

Five hundred feet, or more, we stand
Above the river's brink;
The valley opes, on either hand,
A thousand yards, I think.

Less than five miles it is, they say,
Counting the weir and all,
From the white sanded little bay
Up to the waterfall.

Yet, in that narrow compass lies
Scenes fair as man ere trod,
Meet for an earthly paradise,
Would he but walk with God!

'Twas there in olden days, no doubt,
The good old monks would stroll,
The pious gems they then thought out
Live now in treasured scroll.

There precious missals oft they worked,
From models choice and rare,
When flora bloomed and fauna lurked,
In such abundance there.

And Holy Thursday would they spend,
With deftly-baited hook,
Fresh tribute from the stream to send
To the good abbott's cook.

Yet, ere a silent course it takes,
It babbles o'er the stones,
And sweet the music that it makes
In ever-changing tones.

Then, plunging down a short cascade,
It enters the lagoon,
Where many a silver ripple's made,
Reflecting sun or moon.

Lagoon no more! though still the name
Clings to the little lake,
For here, when first the Banker came,
His residence to make.

The sea such time, with fitful tide,
The river's flood would swell,
As those huge boulders, scattered wide,
Now testify so well.

A wealthy man he was, e'en then,
Full twenty years ago,
When he sent down a hundred men
To check the ocean's flow.

'Twas then they made that noble weir
That crowns the little bay;
The work of some great engineer,
Whose name will last for aye.

Here, at its head, the small cascade
By stepping-stones is crossed,
With artful carelessness displayed,
As though there tempest tossed.

You see a sweet acacia grove
Adorns the southern shore!
Exotic trees, the bank above,
With stately sycamore!

Whilst silver beeches here and there,
On plateaux of bright green,
Wave lace-like branches in the air,
Proud as the forest's queen!

Regard we now the northern bank!
How different its charms,
Huge copper beeches rank by rank,
Expand their sturdy arms.

Those monarchs, long the valley's pride,
Stand on an even plane,
The walks between, soft, green, and wide,
One longs to tread again.

That terrace, where the beeches grow,
Now levelled with such care,
Was once a quarry, long ago—
The abbey stones lay there.

Five years it took the engineer
And gardener, hand-in-hand,
To make an Alpine garden here;
The fairest in the land.

The monks tore down the great hill side,
To win the best of stone;
The refuse falling in the tide
Until the work was done.

This levelled down the gardener takes,
Rich alluvial soil,
And in due time that terrace makes,
By dint of patient toil.

The trees on this side woo the stream,
O'er the sward dance their leaves,
With varied hues they flash and gleam,
Like one who carpet weaves.

Look now on yonder cliff awhile,
Forget the scene below,
Where nature can do naught but smile;
Down where the beeches grow!

How grand it is! so stern, so bold!
Like Memnon's tuneful head,
Which still, impassible and cold,
Looks as in ages fled.

And rugged as that other head,
The mentor of our youth,
Whose words shall live, though he be dead,
So long as men love truth.

As the sun's rays from Memnon drew
Divinest melody,
So all things noble, good and true,
Roused Carlisle's sympathy.

And from yon cliff, so rude and bare,
Should you draw near, you find
Spring flowers and plants, as sweet and fair,
As when earth is most kind.

Thus from a harsh exterior,
Nature, full often, yields
Charms that are far superior
To gayer friends and fields.

Here, then, the gardener with true art
Hath wooed her not in vain,
Each tiny crevice bearing part
To pay him back again.

Exotic ferns, with mosses rare,
Names that strike awe in us,
Grow as though native to the air,
Seeming indigenous.

And in the cliffs obdurate face,
A zig zag path is hewn,
By which you reach with easy pace,
Those downs with heather strewn.

So well concealed the pathway lies
Hid from each point of view,
That still the cliff would seem to rise
In its old time worn hue.

Now rested by the change, the eye,
Turns to the lake once more,
Where rippling waves go dancing by
The islets fertile shore.

For in mid-stream the river's silt
In ancient days had thrown
A bank, whereon has now been built
That isle where palms are grown.

The fairy bridge next comes in view,
Three arches span the stream ;
Daintily painted white and blue,
Tricked out with gold each beam.

From youth to age, from grave to gay,
Yon Janus Bridge appears,
This side, for merry youth the way,
Whilst that suits age and tears.

Well does it match the brilliant scene,
That fairy fabric there ;
The broad lagoon with verge of green,
The isle a gay parterre.

But when the lake you leave behind
And enter yonder wood,
The sombre granite bridge, you find,
Suits best your altered mood.

There trees o'erhanging shade the stream,
The banks and turf beyond,
Save where, at times, a stray sunbeam
Lights up some giant frond.

A grateful shade in summer time
And midst the noontide heat,
I know of nothing more sublime
Than such a cool retreat.

For in Diana's sacred haunt
Sweet peace is sure to dwell ;
There fashion never comes to flaunt,
Nor arrogance to swell.

Since other tenants hath the wood,
Fancy loves there to roam,
Whilst inspiration, pure and good,
Oft claims it for her home.

A thousand charms the wood contains,
Fresh beauties ever rife,
Except in rare torrential rains,
The sweetest spot in life.

Swift runs the river through the dale,
The bed not wide but deep,
For well the rocky banks prevail,
The flood its course to keep.

Gently the path slopes from the ridge,
Connecting down with down,
Whence, looking back, you view the bridge,
A noble mural crown.

There, just beyond the wood, you see
A bright and sunny glade,
Through which the stream glides lazily,
Bereft of any shade.

This vale, the home of favoured flocks,
Was once washed by the sea,
Which, though restrained by weir and locks,
Yet beats as tunefully.

The union is now complete,
Yon broad Atlantic wave,
The shifting tomb of many a fleet,
Becomes our river's grave !

Though what we lose in simple joys
In grandeur there we gain;
Man's greatest works seem but mere toys
Before the mighty main!

But now the sea serenely smiles,
And in the little bay
Clamorous waves the time beguiles,
Sprinkling the rocks with spray!

This, then, the scene that met his gaze,
And, spite of hopes and fears,
His mind reverts to bygone days,
Brings back departed years!

He views the scene, whilst yet a boy,
Sweet Alice still a child,
Pleased with some gaudy little toy,
With rapture nearly wild.

Or sees them walking, hand-in-hand,
Sedately on that shore,
Her bright eyes bent upon the strand,
Conning her lessons o'er.

Again, in fancy, climb High Tor,
The world at large to see;
Alas! the view they then longed for
Should bring this agony!

At last the outward sense grows dim,
The youth no longer sees
The present scenes, so dear to him,
The past, too, also flees.

Their place the dreaded future takes—
Alice, his whilorn bride,
Her happy Cornish home forsakes
For courtly pomp and pride.

“May she be happy” is his prayer,
“Upon that noble head”
He cries, amidst his deep despair,
“May heaven’s full light be shed.”

A long farewell he seemed to take
Of the enchanting scene,
Whilst sorely did his fond heart ache,
Knowing what might have been.

Then, from the cliff away he turns,
And oft in after years
The vision of this scene returns,
As it e’en now appears.

How fares sweet Alice at the well?
Their former trysting place;
Can time in any wise dispel
The grief writ on that face?

A mind from which the soul has fled,
Fair scenes still lacking light,
The vestal for whom love is dead,
Pride vanquished in the fight.

All this, and more, her face pourtrays,
She wears so sad an air,
As though her mind was still amaze,
Her heart sunk in despair.

Yet time the deepest wounds can heal,
Experience has taught ;
The friend whose recent loss we feel
In time will prove as naught.

But can the dear maid ere forget
The handsome gallant youth,
And live as though they ne'er had met,
Not having wealth, forsooth ?

No ! her's is not a sordid mind,
Mere wealth she cannot love,
A soul so noble and refined
Riches can never move !

Her gentle breast with grief was torn,
For well she knew her sire
Since the first hour that she was born
Had cherished one desire.

Denied his wish, a son and heir
He vowed that his wealth should,
By the hand of his daughter fair
Dignify royal blood.

That men in time to come might say,
When he should be their theme—
“The name grew noble from the day
He realized his dream!”

Thus, all the arts that can adorn
His daughter had been taught,
Which she, with talent quite inborn,
Full studiously wrought.

What her proud parent then will feel
When the truth she must tell,
Her tender mind would oft reveal,
“His life’s dream ’twill dispel!”

In this she thought not of herself,
Her duty was too plain;
She could not marry for mere pelf,
But she must spare *him* pain.

For though but simple his own tastes,
Yet on her home he spends
Such sums only a proud man wastes,
Attaining cherished ends.

And should she marry not his choice,
Is she prepared to take
The risk of his condemning voice
And her dear home forsake?

Her loving mother, ere she died,
Breathing her last farewell,
"Beware, dear child! thy father's pride,
And in his favour dwell!"

Words hallowed by a parent's death
No loving child forgets,
And Alice, now, with bated breath,
Murmurs her fond regrets.

"Dear mother, from thy home above
Regard thy weeping child,
From that bright realm of God and love—
Love pure and undefiled."

"Direct her now the path to choose,
Let not her tears prove vain;
Her father's love she would not lose,
Yet Harold's still retain."

"With heaven's wisdom fill her soul,
That she may walk aright;
Her ev'ry thought do thou control,
And keep faith's lamp alight."

Few that have neared brief life's mid-day
But will have lost some friend,
To whom their hearts will turn alway
Unto life's bitter end,

If such where noble, pure, and bright,
Garnered whilst in their prime,
Brave followers of that true light
That shineth for all time.

Their constant thoughts will ever fly
To those departed saints,
Whose influence shall never die
Until weak nature faints.

An inflatus old Greece imputes
Not to one God alone,
But this our simpler creed refutes,
Blest by the three in one.

Such moral influence or force,
True unction of the blest,
Will now ordain our dear maid's course,
And guide her for the best.

END OF SECOND CANTO.

CANTO III.

IN tears Erato's gone, and thou,
Sad eyed Melpomene,
Shall guide my feet and lead me now
To sweet Aganippe.

Apollo grant but one deep draught,
From Helicon's charmed fount,
And thus inspire with needful craft,
What I would here recount !

With march sedate, the tragic muse,
From the west would turn us,
To the foul city's noisome stews,
Our modern Avernus.

Hid in that city's sooty slums,
A pot-house lies concealed,
And from its portals now there comes,
A wretch whose fate is sealed.

A well-dressed man with careless gait,
Broad chest and head erect,
A country squire of second rate,
You fancy you detect.

But 'tis not so! that is a wretch,
Steeped to the lips in crime;
His certain fate, the hangman Ketch,
Unless well "scotched" in time.

An actor of the actors, this,
So well he plays his part,
His very tools would think amiss,
Did he lay down his art.

With ruddy face and beaming smile,
Life seeming at its best;
An off-hand, hearty, rustic style,
And to the manner drest.

Accustomed long to scent his foes,
In simple passers by,
He scans them all, as on he goes,
Yet none may catch his eye.

No beggar asks his alms in vain,
And oft some little maid,
Safe escort cross the road will gain,
Should she stand sore afraid.

But why strolls he so far away,
This charming summer morn,
Far from the scent of new-mown hay
And sheen of waving corn?

Far from that farm, where as a lad
His early life was spent,
On Yorkshire moor, with heather clad;
Far from his home in Kent.

Son of a northern farmer he,
Both parents now long dead;
Rule is hard in the north countree,
Early from home he fled.

A trade, at first, he made of sport,
Like many more of late,
Who to such pastimes, now resort,
Attracted by "the gate."

And when such gains proved all too poor
His craving heart to please,
His father's death did then ensure,
The means to live at ease.

His patrimony next he spends
In aimless wanderings,
Wasting his substance on false friends
And base philanderings.

When both of funds and friends bereft,
Starvation still he shirks,
By games of chance, or petty theft,
Where little danger lurks.

Until he finds another way,
One that shall never fail,
Consorts with men, rich, thoughtless, gay,
Then from them wrings blackmail.

In this, he's helped by what men call,
"The manner of the man,"
A jolly style, that pleases all,
So free from scheme or plan.

What he now is we soon shall know,
But see! he turns aside,
And swaggers past yon portico,
With well affected pride!

With beaming smile and jocund air,
The corridor goes through,
Until he gains a little stair,
When lost is he to view.

Surely 'tis no symposium,
So early in the day?
Nay! naught but a gymnasium,
Where adolescents play!

Divested soon of hat and coat,
The man we better see,
Deep chest, broad shoulders, shapely throat,
Strength with agility.

And now he enters on a course,
An easy task to him,
Nimble he vaults the wooden horse,
Thus testing wind and limb.

Then, flying up and down the hall,
From ladder rung to rung,
At heights from which 'twere death to fall,
With steady nerve he swung.

Now with the pommel has a bout,
The heavy clubs come next,
When the instructor, coming out,
They fence till well nigh vexed.

An expert with the single stick,
When e'er he feels a thwack,
The foe *soi disant* finds right quick,
He promptly pays it back.

Lastly, the sawmill's patient toil
He works with might and main,
Like one who by such humble moil,
A livelihood doth gain.

After a good hour's exercise,
He hurries on his clothes,
And through the streets he almost flies,
So buoyantly he goes.

Next for a turkish bath he calls,
And there, he rests a time,
For when he leaves its steaming walls,
He hears the noontide chime.

This doth admonish him to take
The necessary snack,
A frugal chop, or tender steak,
Then quietly walk back.

That done, a brief half-hour, he finds,
That he can still command ;
So through those narrow streets he winds,
The city's border land.

Lying between the east and west,
Dividing grave and gay,
The rich and poor, the worst and best,
The vilest and their prey.

There in a quiet street we see,
He enters a saloon,
Where sundry marksmen seem to be,
"Pot-firing at the moon."

Whilst others, more ambitious still,
Aim at the bounding stag,
Although an utter want of skill
Is all that they can brag.

But not so he who enters now
With perfect nonchalance ;
No posturing does he allow,
He hardly deigns a glance.

Taking a rifle from its place,
His first ball hits the deer,
Though such a shot in real chase
Had not checked its career.

Still, after such rude exercise,
It would not have been strange,
Nor matter of the least surprise,
Had it been out of range.

Be that, however, as it may,
Comfort from it he drew,
For by that smile he seems to say,
"I fancy that will do."

Luring the loader to his side,
Each weapon will he try,
As though he wishes to decide
The kind of one to buy.

Yet trying o'er and o'er again
The smallest of them all,
Great skill with which does he attain
'Gainst targe and flying ball.

Now at a ball flung high in air,
Then some mark on the ground ;
Seeming to fire without a care,
Sometimes, whilst turning round.

So oft his errant shots strike home,
God help the wretch who stands,
Should enmity between them come,
Before his skilful hands.

Quick is his eye, like steel his nerves,
Ruddy with health his cheek ;
His well knit frame, a strong will serves,
The true athlete's physique !

With largesse now he pays his score,
And soon his nimble feet
Will pass out through the open door
Into the quiet street.

His face he turns due citywards,
But as he nears the bank,
An empty cab his quest rewards,
Returning to its rank.

One word suffices to convey,
The course it is to take,
And whilst they speed upon their way,
Some changes will he make.

A massive wedding ring he'll wear,
Upon his strong right hand,
To give himself a sober air,
He dons a mourning band.

Another pins he on his arm,
Which, with black edged kerchief,
Neat memoriam pin and charm,
A semblance gives of grief.

Crafty, he knows these trifles show,
The ordinary mind,
Respectability of woe,
Or, something of the kind.

That railway station soon they gain,
By which our tourists reach
The cruel wreckers old domain,
And famed Tintagel's Beach.

Truly old things give place to new,
For modern Cornish men
Are hospitable, kind and true,
Though still as brave as then.

No more those faithless fires are lit,
Sole cause of dire distress ;
No more does Merlin's spirit flit
O'er ancient Lyonnese.

Like sentient thing, the engine,
Stands snorting in its place,
Eager the journey to begin,
Impatient for the race.

Meanwhile the secret signal man,
Holds in his hands their fate ;
Until the guard jumps in his van,
Barely ten seconds late.

Now whilst the train, with ceaseless din,
Speeds safely on its way,
By rapid glance we see therein ;
Who travels west to-day ?

Our sturdy and athletic friend
Came first upon the scene,
His comrades placed at either end,
The Banker rides between.

He and his noble friend, the Duke,
Are seated side by side ;
Whilst the guards duty, 'tis, to look,
No others there shall ride.

Their suite, a second class has filled,
Save one smart little chap ;
Who has, by slight attentions skilled,
Thrust himself in the gap.

This dapper spark, a tiger seems,
 Brimful of life and fun,
And soon each face, with laughter beams,
 Humour's contagion.

For still can Comus overthrow
 The barb fence of reserve,
And wit diffuse a genial glow,
 In decorum's preserve.

Smart with his tongue, his dress as smart
 As any of his race,
And well he plies each petty art,
 That social life doth grace.

For though a tiger now he seems,
 Oft hath that argus eye
Kept wakeful ward in others schemes,
 Mouchard's a human fly!

He served Lord Thyse and then Sir Thatte,
 Travelling far and wide,
Until he knew each diplomat,
 As well as country side.

One time he served a city man,
 Since mighty in the law ;
'Twas then, he hit upon the plan,
 Of selling what he saw.

Should you from friends or party stray,
Mouchard will search you out!
Turn on each step the light of day,
Leaving no room for doubt.

Yet his was not the eye that saw,
Oh! dear no! not at all!
He never stands in court of law,
Nor helps the rolling ball?

Like sign post on the road of life,
He may not say one word,
But mutely pointing to the strife,
Let's others wield the sword.

From north to south, from east to west,
Mouchard hath oftimes gone:
Granting himself no needless rest,
Until his task was done.

But not always to aid our laws,
His talent he displays!
For few such fees as he now draws,
The niggard justice pays.

Now why he journeys west, to-day,
Our story must unfold;
Meanwhile the party is kept gay,
By jests adroitly told.

For he possessed the talent rare,
That charm of social life :
Bright conversation, free from care,
With wit and humour rife.

And this with his linguistic powers,
And art of mimicry,
Now helped him pass, the eight long hours,
Far from unpleasantly.

For little dreamt such simple folks,
Each chance word they let fall,
Thrown off their guard by his quaint jokes,
He could at will recall.

Yes! it is said, his grace goes now,
His bride elect to meet ;
A coronet place on her brow,
A fortune at her feet.

Nor would he go with empty hand ?
Of that you may be sure !
Rumour had whispered something grand ?
A diamond parure !

No one has seen it, that we know,
Still ! coachey heard the news ?
Aye ! where the upper servants go,
Slick Ashton's in the mews !

Then follows Mouchard's anecdote,
Of how he once was sent
To some outlandish place remote,
Upon the continent.

A case of bijoutry to take,
Unto his master there ;
He bought two bags, of self same make,
And carried both with care.

In Paris, where he spent the night,
He lost the first black bag,
And though the thief had not guessed right!
It left him not a rag.

In Zurich the next night, he slept,
But ere it was half gone,
Some thief into his chamber crept,
And filched the other one.

Still the rich casket was not lost,
Trust him alone for that !
Take it he would, at any cost,
To far off Andermatt.

Impedimenta now he'd none,
Yet spite of this mishap,
No fear had he, of any one,
Though but a little chap.

But when the next day was far spent,
The coach, stopping to dine ;
A talkative, left handed gent,
He thought had drugged his wine.

So fearing accidents, you know,
He never drank a drop ;
Taking instead his neighbours though,
Who there that night must stop.

Ay ! Aye ! he got there safe at last,
When, under master's keys
The jewel case was locked up fast,
And he once more at ease.

Next morn, uprising with the sun,
A score of miles he rode,
And ere the day had well begun,
Into that hostel strode,

Where he had dined the day before,
In hopes that he would find
His left hand friend, with aspect sore,
Through being left behind.

Well ! sure enough, there did he sit,
With visage woe begone,
Trying his best to eat a bit,
Though appetite he'd none.

Just like some poor young neophyte,
Who venturing too far
Upon his fatal first gay night,
Lies crushed 'neath Circe's car.

Since the narcotic had worked well,
Holding the luckless wight,
A captive to its drowsy spell,
Throughout the livelong night.

Silenced, just now, the empty laugh,
Vanished the knowing smile,
Spent the base coin of vulgar chaff,
Gone that false hearty style.

With throbbing temple, sunken eye,
Parched tongue and pallid cheek ;
Those witnesses that cannot lie,
The truth perforce must speak.

But now that Mouchard's coming in,
He would not seem abashed ;
So greets him with a friendly grin,
Though rage his bosom lashed.

For you know how the vile must yearn,
For retribution grim,
'Gainst one who could completely turn,
The tables upon him.

The vanquished brave, for noble foe,
True reverence may feel ;
But your whipped cur, can only know,
The hate he must conceal.

Assuming the proud air of one,
Who boasts of the result ;
Of some great feat that he has done
Daring, or difficult,

Mouchard relates how he pressed on
To reach a certain place,
Before the diligence had gone,
To save a wild goose chase.

How by good luck he was in time,
With a full hour to spare,
Although it was a weary climb,
In the chill morning air.

The master safely off to Rome,
The man you soon shall see
Wandering leisurely back home,
Unfettered, fancy free.

“The Captain’s gone to Rome, you say ?”
Queries the left hand friend.
“Will he take Venice in his way,
Or by lake Como wend ?”

“You know him then !” Mouchard replies,
In a gay careless tone ;
Conveying not the least surprise,
Pleasure and pride alone.

“Certainly not !” Gaucher exclaims,
A lapsus all the same ;
But such ignore truth’s modest claims,
When lies best suit their game.

If coward falsehood dares to stand,
The searching light of day,
A legion lies will it demand,
The craven heart to stay.

But not thus bides pure simple truth,
Progenitor of time,
Alone in everlasting youth,
Immutable, sublime.

Thus to one lie came trooping more,
No matter if we see,
There were a dozen or a score,
From such an one as he.

“You said yourself that was his style,
Or how should I have known ?”
Though flushed and blanched his cheek the while,
And angry grew his tone.

Whilst Mouchard, having made his coup,
Feels certain he will win,
If Gaucher, as he's sure to do,
Puts confidence therein.

However, not to tire them out,
Mouchard will curtly say,
"Gaucher to Rome, without a doubt,
Hastened that very day!"

Thus Mouchard whiles away the time,
Gaining his hearer's hearts,
By story, jest and pantomime,
Much as my verse imparts.

But since all mankind are creatures,
Of habit, more or less,
And language borrows its features,
From thoughts our lives express.

Mouchard the tiger, valet, groom,
Talking to his confrères,
Will speak the language of that room,
Reached by the servant's stair,

Just as your sportsmen talk of dogs,
The churchmen of their calls,
The mariner of charts and logs,
The fop of routs and balls.

Each social caste will language use,
By which it stands confest ;
Phrases that it alone would choose,
Express its thoughts the best.

Meanwhile the train goes thundering,
In safety to its goal ;
Haply unscathed by blundering
Of any o'erwrought soul.

Still there remains for us to tell,
Of two more passengers,
Who travel west this day as well,
Perchance fates messengers ?

For since the world has proved so small,
None may express surprise,
If e'en from such it should befall,
Mischief or good arise !

The comrades of our sturdy friend,
'Twas he who paid their fares ;
Seemed hirelings, such as tradesmen send,
Charged with household repairs.

The first a common working man,
Of somewhat rustic breed ;
The other, by his visage wan,
More of a city weed.

Jim is the name the first one owns,
Old Paint Potts, the other ;
Though it ought surely to be Jones !
So they call his brother !

Between them passed no word or sign,
Dissembled they so well,
That how they chanced to fall in line
No looker on might tell.

As we have seen, our athlete went,
At once into the train,
And then they all, with one consent,
Avoid meeting again.

Thus, as if they had never met,
One sits near the centre,
Jim goes as far as he can get,
Potts this end will enter :

And watchful eyes could not detect,
A single furtive act ;
Nor yet in any way connect,
The three in secret pact.

At last the pleasant journey ends,
Mouchard is all alive ;
To-morrow he will see his friends,
If he can so contrive.

The Banker's carriage stops the way,
The platform well nigh full ;
His servants make a brave display :
The Duke looks bored and dull.

The silent three pass slowly on,
Their keen attentive eyes,
Observing all, observed by none,
As silent as the wise.

Into the darkness of the night,
Our actors pass away ;
Nor will we, till the morning light,
Their further acts portray.

END OF THIRD CANTO.

CANTO IV.

ARUGGED path, not long but steep,
My muse hath still to climb :
Her errant feet, to metre keep,
With afflatus sublime.

Inspire me then ye tuneful nine,
And thou Melpomene,
Rounding each verse, pointing each line,
In perfect harmony.

Into the darkness of the night,
Such darkness as is found,
When summer's solstice would unite,
Daylight's scarce broken round.

We said our actors stole away,
As night's light mantle fell ;
Now will we see, the God of day,
That flimsy robe dispel.

From the closed portals of the east,
A faint gray light first rose ;
Which as in time, its power increased,
From gray to amber grows.

But ere a single hour has fled,
The gates then opened wide ;
The Sun God from his golden bed,
Rises in all his pride.

Silent, mysterious and great,
Formed on so vast a plan ;
No wonder unregenerate,
And primordial man,

Should long have worshipped thee as God
And do yet bend the knee,
In lands still groaning neath the rod
Of gross idolatry.

Soon floods of golden light suffuse
The awakening earth,
And the sun's alchemy imbues
All things with life and mirth.

The dancing wave, the smiling field,
The songster on the bough,
With glad accord their homage yield,
Up to bright Phœbus now.

A million sun's may systems own,
Co-ordinate with ours,
But earth looks up to thee alone,
For light's precious powers.

When God from chaos order drew,
Sublime those words of might,
From which, in time, all systems grew,
That said "Let there be light!"

Offspring of heat, twice blessed light,
Parent of earthly life ;
Dispersed again those shades of night,
With death and darkness rife :

And art thou not to us a sign,
Of that still purer ray,
Which centred in the Son Divine,
Creates eternal day ?

Forth from each sheltered creek now glides,
The gallant white winged fleet,
That round our coasts serenely rides,
For British pastime sweet.

Forth from their shieldings too there comes,
The perfume breathing kine ;
Whilst on the downs the bee now hums,
And conies leave their mine.

But ere the timid creatures run,
A hundred yards away,
Some fearful sounds, their quick ears stun,
'Tis Jason's deep mouthed bay.

For now the gates are opened wide,
And Harold sallies forth,
To take his early morning ride,
Down by Trevellan Porth :

And truly mated well, are these,
The youth, the hound, the steed :
Each boasts the best of pedigrees,
For valour, blood and speed.

Harold and Jason, well we know,
The horse is of that race,
That ingrate man has long ago,
Yielded a foremost place.

The glossy hide in perfect trim,
Its large and lustrous eyes,
The ample chest and shapely limb,
Comparison defies.

But whilst his humble friends enjoy
Their frolic on the beach,
Sad thoughts their master's peace destroy :
Thoughts far too deep for speech.

Another wretched night had passed,
With almost sleepless lids ;
Since weakness must with sin be classed,
When honour's code forbids.

And no moral coward is he,
But brave, of that true kind ;
Gallant to intrepidity,
With thoughtfulness combined.

Therefore, not of himself alone,
He thinks of that fond heart,
That beats responsive to his own,
Which too must bear the smart.

Like one on routine task engaged,
The mind all unconcerned,
The heart by sorrow's stings enraged,
Ere resignation's learned.

More like a wraith, than his true self,
Our hero rides to-day :
His comrades frisk, as 'twere by stealth,
So sober is their play.

For horse and hound both seem to know,
Things are not quite the same ;
No sounds encouraging the glow,
Of emulation's flame.

Homewards at length his way he wends,
Resolved there to await,
What fortune or misfortune sends,
This day to seal his fate.

His regiment, quartered in the north,
In restful peace still lies ;
But he in war must seek henceforth,
That peace which peace denies,

Now, whilst the path winds up the hill,
Whereon the castle stands,
See how his glances wander still,
Over the Abbey lands !

Why does he start and try to scan,
The fair domain below ?
Too far it is, to know the man,
If he be friend or foe :

He sees a horseman cross the downs,
At exercising pace ;
Descries the Duke, then fiercely frowns,
And turns away his face.

At least, his jealousy discerns,
His rival in this man ;
For soon the noblest nature learns,
The green eyed monster's plan,

Which makes e'en trifles light as air,
Seem confirmation strong,
To plunge his victims in despair ;
Misjudging right for wrong.

Though thoughts more worthy soon shall rise,
No brave heart long consents,
To harbour those it must despise ;
Virtue all vice resents.

But Harold's very human, now,
Wearied in mind and frame ;
As home he rides, with clouded brow
Sadly : as forth he came.

Once there, a host of cares engage,
His mind for a brief space ;
Though nought his anguish can assuage,
Nor add to life one grace.

Meanwhile the hound unnoticed lies,
A patient willing slave ;
Watching with eager loving eyes,
That countenance so grave.

And there we leave them for a time,
Our story now demands,
We go, invoking aid sublime,
Down to the Abbey lands.

Where first, the painter Potts we find,
With ladder and with brush,
Clearing the spouts of leaves, the wind
Had culled from tree and bush.

With town bred craft, this wily one,
Early had ascertained,
The village carpenter had gone
From home and been detained.

His next step was to find his way,
Down to this worthy's yard ;
And there to borrow, for the day,
That ladder we regard.

Then with a dust brush and a pail,
Helped by poor village Bob ;
He tells a very artful tale,
And enters on his job.

And well and faithfully he wrought,
That morning on the roof,
As many bucketfulls he brought,
The gardener, was a proof.

For Potts was deep and wished to make,
This man think well of him,
Therefore great trouble did he take,
Risking both life and limb.

No more than justice had it been,
Frankly at once to own,
Workman more thorough, neat and clean,
That house had never known.

Still, although Potts had worked so well,
Observed was he by none ;
Nor could the inmates even tell,
His work had aye been done.

His ladder placed 'gainst gable end,
Was screened from public eye ;
Where elms a grateful shelter lend,
To stores and buttery.

But when the Banker and his guest,
Went o'er the downs to ride ;
Potts, with the gardener and the rest,
Came to the southern side.

For on this side is found displayed,
The garden's brightest charms ;
Flora, in royal robes arrayed,
Invites you to her arms :

And now that this sweet spot is free,
The gardener's love and pride ;
Work seems in very ecstasy,
Raging on ev'ry side.

No droughty plant, no fading bloom,
Must strangers' eyes detect ;
Nor skill, nor thought, leave any room,
For strictures on neglect.

Since here, that plant of tardy growth,
 Blooms in a moral sense,
T'wixt man and master, shared by both ;
 Grows perfect confidence.

For strange as it must seem, this man,
 Loves his stern master well,
And strives by all the means he can,
 To make his service tell.

Whilst he, the banker, could he love,
 Did surely love this youth ;
Whose sole ambition was to prove,
 His gratitude and truth.

Born on the soil, his father's place,
 In time he came to fill ;
For when a boy his fearless face,
 Gained the rich man's goodwill.

In public school he had him taught,
 A ground work to obtain,
And then by foreign travel sought
 Experience to gain.

Nor did he spare the youngster's hands,
 But as it was at Kew ;
He worked in many foreign lands,
 And thus their systems knew.

But when, at last, probation o'er,
Homeward he gladly came ;
None could work better, few knew more
And famous grew his name.

To some is given, the gift to know,
The mysteries of life.
Those hidden things, " which passeth show"
With which our world is rife.

Intuitively Midas knew,
Without a second glance ;
When men were honest, good and true,
Just by the countenance.

Oft in the city, it was said,
None of his protégés ;
Had ever any man misled,
Or failed to make their way.

No wonder then this gardener proved,
A notable success ;
Nor was it strange, the young man loved,
His patron to excess.

His heart devoted to his craft,
No other passion knew ;
Hence from this one in ample draught,
It inspiration drew.

For what more mighty motives move
The hearts and minds of men,
Than those two passions, hate and love,
Surpassing human ken.

But let us not prolong the scene,
The sequel soon is told ;
A man's best work has ever been
For love, and not, for gold !

Ergo, in less than one short hour,
By well directed toil,
Swept was the lawn, trimmed each flower,
And freshened up the soil

Within this time, too, Potts had fled,
His ladder laid aside,
But not before that cunning head,
Knew well each room that side.

Those are the chambers of the Duke !
The Banker's room is here !
His daughter sleeps in yonder nook ;
Her maids no doubt lie near !

The rooms which open on the lawn,
The state apartments are ;
Their treasures from all countries drawn,
Both costly and bizarre.

For now the world has restless grown,
No simple native taste
Will satisfy the mind alone,
However true and chaste.

This banquet hall is still antique !
That, salon Florentine !
This Arabesque is quite unique ;
That, Japanese design !

But who comes here on sorry screw,
Curvetting in such style ?
Surely that groom the servants knew ;
Mouchard the man of guile !

His steed, the well known inn yard mount,
A thing of blood and bone,
Whose feats, the villagers recount :
But whose best days have flown.

His mythic master not yet come,
He thought he'd like to view,
The famous Banker's stately home,
If they dare show him through.

With smooth insinuating tongue,
The household being out ;
Consent is from the Butler wrung,
Who shows Mouchard about.

Nor does he ill requite his care,
So deferentially :
Praised all he saw, with words so fair,
Clothed with simplicity.

Slyly he rallied the old man,
Upon his careful ways ;
Flattered him well, as such folks can,
Yet seeming not to praise.

Though whilst his tongue ran gaily on,
He used his eyes so well,
That ere a brief half hour was gone,
The house plan he could tell.

Affecting a great dread of fire,
With all entailed thereby ;
On many points, could he enquire,
Yet not appear to spy.

But soon he bade his friends adieu,
As ever, blythe and gay ;
Remounts once more that wretched screw,
And caracoles away.

Close by the Abbey lodge he meets,
Our friend with smiling face ;
Walking, like all well trained athletes,
An easy measured pace.

No one would dare suspect he strolled,
Save to admire the scene ;
Which here, with beauties manifold,
Lay peaceful and serene.

As the groom on his worn out hack,
Goes prancing gaily by,
The athlete leaves the beaten track,
Nor deigns to raise an eye :

And what in Cornwall would seem strange,
Famed for such courtesies ;
No kindly greetings they exchange,
Neither the other sees.

But see we've gained the village street ;
The world's epitome,
Here stands a farm, with dairy sweet,
There wreckage from the sea.

This is the well known village inn,
For homely fare renowned !
That fickle fashion's magasin,
Where rustic beauty's gowned !

Here with its ancient holy rood,
The silent graves among ;
Like one withdrawn, in pensive mood,
To watch lifes busy throng.

Stands in the centre, as it should,
A sermon in its stones,
Guarding, as custodian good,
The rude forefather's bones ;

The parish church, whose changeful chimes,
Still summons to her fold,
Faithful through good and evil times ;
Rich and poor, young and old.

Thus surrounded by God's acre,
Firmly may she ever stand ;
Spite of vain attempts to shake her
Influence in the land.

Spite of some few misguided sons,
Despite her own defects ;
Spite of those carping restless ones,
Those breeders of new sects.

Deep rooted in her children's hearts,
And still shedding around,
That charity, her creed imparts,
With which her faith is bound.

The local Galen fronts the square,
Wherein the old church stands ;
Some skill, combined with patience rare,
Respect and love commands.

The ruddy butcher with his steel,
Stands smiling at yon door ;
Whilst huge blue bottles, hum and wheel,
Round the sleek grocer's store.

The post office and library,
Have come now into view ;
Where the classics are but chary,
The novels far from new.

Then last, but not the least, we see,
That great emporium ;
Where human ingenuity,
May never reach its sum.

Where steel and iron, brass and gold,
Wood, ivory and bone ;
Combined in uses manifold,
By all the arts yet known.

Where gas engines and telephones,
With timepieces and toys.
Will help the bees, amuse the drones,
And aid domestic joys.

The street, now leading to the beach,
A change comes o'er the scene
Far as the naked eye can reach,
Glows ocean's silver sheen.

But surely, there stands silent Jim ;
Smoking at his inn door ;
The "One and all," just suiting him.
With its rough sand strewn floor.

The landlord, captain of the "Wave,"
Just coming home to dine,
An anxious glance to windward gave ;
In search of weather sign :

When seeing Jim lounge idly there,
In compliment, he spoke,
Of the bright day and sultry air,
And cracked some little joke.

Then big with news he had just heard,
With which the place was rife ;
Told how the Queen had now conferred,
A peerage for his life,

Upon the Banker, and 'twas said,
His child, plain Miss no more ;
A noble Duke was soon to wed,
With titles by the score.

Now Jim's strong point was reticence,
And like most silent men ;
Listen could he with rare patience,
To things within his ken.

Thus whilst the old Captain chattered,
Of Bankers and of Dukes ;
His listener merely flattered,
In syllables and looks.

Much information, soon he gained,
Some, he desired to know ;
The whole of which had been obtained,
By gossip's heedless flow.

But other scenes await us now,
If we our steps retrace ;
Where sorrow sits on beauty's brow,
Yet adds another grace !

For only pensive shades are cast,
When sorrow first is known,
Till melancholy claims, at last ;
The victim for her own.

And oh ! what wells of love are there,
In those dear thoughtful eyes ;
Catching beyond the world's despair,
Glimpses of paradise !

The mobile face, reflecting still,
The deeper waves of thought ;
Expresses all of good and ill,
With which the soul is fraught.

But this is no meet home for grief,
Surroundings so refined ;
Must soon bring comfort and relief,
To the most troubled mind.

Alas ! alas ! that is not so,
Dives doth oft conceal ;
A far more crushing weight of woe
Than Lazarus could feel.

The threadbare coat, the scanty gown,
Oft covers happiness,
Unknown to those of great renown ;
Though robed in stateliness !

The abject's grief is writ so plain,
That they who run may read ;
Whilst science searches, oft in vain
That worm the rich ones feed.

Yet surely want, and fell disease,
Poverty's heritage ;
Must still surpass such woes as these.
And sympathy engage ?

Nor rich, nor poor, can well complain,
When sorrow follows sin ;
Primeval cause of grief and pain,
Since Eve first let it in.

Whilst a sure anodyne is found,
Through the anointed One ;
In those dear words, how sweet they sound !
"The future shall atone".

Now day is spent, a moonless night,
Unfolds her sable wings,
Though still some faint portentous, light
Out in the west yet clings.

Well might the Captain of the "Wave,"
Turn ever towards the west.
As some may find a sailor's grave ;
Ere the wind sinks to rest !

For now a strong sou-wester blows,
The day, begun so well,
From summer shower to tempest grows ;
Till stormy pœans swell.

Whilst with the gale, there alternates,
Copious floods of rain ;
When thunder loud reverberates,
Lightning illumines the main.

On such a night, only the vile,
Or homeless ones, and those ;
Who like young Harold would beguile,
The time and eke their woes.

Venture abroad, and Alice soon,
As the good housewife will ;
Shuts out the storm, though light as noon,
Ensuring comfort still.

Screened from the gale by yonder comb,
The abbey snugly lies ;
They see the ocean lashed to foam,
They hear those weird cave cries.

But naught of fear need stir their breasts,
Housed in that well built pile ;
Its ancient strength, too well attests,
At danger they may smile.

In striking contrast to the night,
Now black as any pall ;
The abbey shows a blaze of light,
Whilst comfort beams on all.

The Englishman's great meal is o'er
And in the grand saloon ;
Now Alice's sweet voice doth soar,
To some inspiring tune.

A fair musician, with that art,
A precious gift most rare,
Which can to words sublime impart,
Just as sublime an air.

Thus whilst the gale without, still raged,
 Music and art, within ;
Their minds with gentler thoughts engaged,
 Heed not the tempest's din.

The lay, the last the minstrel sang,
 As told by nothern bard ;
Tender and true, her rich notes rang,
 Telling of fate so hard.

With genius fired by that flame,
 Lit at Apollo's shrine ;
The music of her harp became,
 Less earthly than divine.

And when she sang of by-gone days,
 Dear to the minstrel's soul ;
Lightly she sketched their simple lays,
 Bidding time backward roll.

But when she sang some warlike theme,
 Telling of fight and fray ;
Her very life would almost seem,
 Soaring in song away.

The ballad done, still the sweet air,
 Dwells softly on the ear,
As though the minstrel's soul, it were,
 That loved to linger near.

Whilst Alice's lithe fingers stray,
The tuneful cords among ;
Slowly now dies the air away,
As died away the song.

The adroit hands at length are still.
Not so the busy brain.
Which ever by each effort will,
Yet greater heights attain.

For genius, rare gift of Heaven,
Accorded but to few ;
Had to this sweet maid been given,
As if 'twere but her due.

Meanwhile the great Duke and his host,
Remain as though entrall'd ;
Talents they knew not she could boast,
Genius that yet appall'd !

For though they both were clever men,
Each of his class primus,
They felt how poor was talent when
Compared with genius.

Not long the Duke remains inert,
He sees the time has come :
His own pretensions to assert,
Or be for ever dumb,

“My Lord ! permit me now to place,
 Within my old friend’s hand,
This deed, which by our Monarch’s grace
 Makes you peer of England.”

“I further crave you will allow,
 One privileged so long,
To place upon your daughter’s brow,
 A diadem of song.”

“The gems are those my mother wore,
 When I was yet a child,
And will, to me, I trust, restore,
 Like influences mild.”

“Thus then my Lord I leave my fate,
 Entirely in your hands ;
Content in silence to await,
 What love and truth demands.”

“No driven deer my bride may be,
 But maid of noble mind,
Her hand, her heart, her fancy free,
 Unfettered as the wind.”

“To such an one, I offer now,
 My honour, wealth, and life ;
Swearing by Hymen’s sacred vow,
 To cherish her as wife.”

In such wise, or to like intent,
The noble suitor spoke,
Then hastes to bring his rich present,
Whose aid he would invoke.

“Oh! Father! bid me not to wed
So proud and stern a mate,
Nay rather, wish thy daughter dead,
Than doomed to such a fate.”

“From childhood’s hour until their day,
Lord Harold, as you know,
Has hoped to lure your child away,
Can I then bid him go?”

“My child too much alone has been,
Has she romantic grown?
Prepare to quit this rustic scene,
For one of higher tone.”

“Leave sentiment, to those who must,
Perforce live by their brains;
Nor place in such the slightest trust,
Where wealth and fashion reigns.”

“Thy mother, best of woman kind,
Was nurtured in that school,
Whence cynics say they only find,
Comes forth your knave or fool.”

“Be then more worthy of thy sire,
To thine own self prove true,
Make my dear wish, thy fond desire,
And bear it nobly through.”

“Thou hast thy mother’s beauty child,
Nor lack thou beauty’s arts,
Be then to fortune reconciled,
Accept all she imparts.”

“Her outstretched hand, may be withdrawn,
Seize it whilst yet you may,
Nor treat her overtures with scorn,
But lead her your own way !”

“Long have I waited for the hour
That crowns a life of toil,
And should it now be in thy power,
Wilt thou its triumph spoil ?”

“One half of all my wealth I give,
My daughter as her dower,
Happy if she is spared to live,
And recognise its power !”

Unfolding then ambitious schemes,
At large, he vainly tried,
To rouse her youthful mind to dreams,
Of influence and pride.

Her brain, clear as Spitzbergen ice,
Her heart, as brave and true,
As his who flung from Paradise,
Satan and all his crew.

Alice knows well each argument,
The worldly wise ones use ;
How they despise, mere sentiment,
And faith in love refuse.

Mysterious affinity,
Body, mind and spirit !
Wonderous human trinity,
When each owns true merit !

Vain insincerity to gloss,
When dealing with a mind
That penetrates the gilded dross,
Poor naked truth to find !

Vain with a noble heart, to plead,
The mean excuse of pride !
Virtue no sophistry will need,
Love shall alone decide.

Yet vainer still, to try and force,
A spirit formed to roam,
Where noblest deeds derive their source ;
True inspiration's home.

For surely no sane mind can dream,
This, is the all in all;
Thus dwarfing God's eternal scheme,
'Twould common sense appal!

Banker beware! wreck not two hearts,
He wants no driven hind;
True, you endowed her human parts,
But God gave soul and mind!

"Hark! Harold's hound is at the door!
What brings it here to-night?
'Twas that no doubt I heard before,
Though then hardly aright!"

"Father where is thy guest the Duke?
He tarries far too long,
His absence wears an ugly look,
Something, I fear, is wrong!"

Then wide open the door she threw
When Jason darting in,
Swift to the closed window flew
And sniffed each bolt and pin.

"Summons the men! raise an alarm!
The dog bad tidings brings!
Perchance his grace has met with harm
See where the hemlock clings!"

Darting now to the window frame,
She flings the curtain wide,
Then peering quickly, through the same,
A ladder there espied.

Jason, meanwhile, more frantic grows,
He springs from pane to pane,
And to the upper floor oft goes,
Returning soon again.

Which Alice seeing, doth discern,
Mischief out there must lurk :
Yet not from danger will she turn,
Nor her plain duty shirk

Therefore, at once, the bolt she draws,
Open the sashes wide,
Nor does the gallant Jason pause,
Straightway to leap outside.

When there, his black snout skims the ground.
Now sodden with the rain ;
Though for a time, no trail he found,
His inquest all in vain.

Until the ladders lowest rung,
Seemed to retain some scent,
When up its slipp'ry steps he sprung,
But failed in the ascent.

No longer may we here delay ;
Lord Harold, what of him ?
Spends he his solitary day,
Within his castle grim ?

But when storm laden the night came,
No longer will he rest ;
The elemental strife, may shame,
The conflict in his breast.

Passing into the murky night,
A victim to despair ;
Nor heart, nor home, nor future bright
The past alone seemed fair.

Sturdily striding down the hill,
Fighting at times for breath ;
He goes, like one whose iron will,
Would conquer even death.

For drenching rain and howling wind,
With ocean's distant roar,
Serves to invigorate his mind,
And soothe the spirit sore.

Far from the Abbey and its grounds,
At first, he makes his way,
Till stunned by ocean's awful sounds,
Blinded by sand and spray ;

He goes that great highway to pace,
That winds across the downs,
A wild and solitary place.
On which his castle frowns ;

And long he wanders on this plain,
Buffeted by the wind :
Until rude effort cools his brain,
And calms at length his mind.

For well our modern pundits know,
Dame nature oft commands ;
Brain work we shall at times forego,
To labour with our hands.

Now, when the hour is waxing late,
He breathes a last farewell,
And watches through the ancient gate,
Those lights he knows so well.

Nor can we blame him, if he stands,
Musing upon the past ;
Whilst darkness shrouds the abbey lands.
By storm and night o'ercast.

For those bright days of long ago,
Why should our hearts still yearn ?
Their joys we never more may know !
Then why the present spurn ?

The past, it is, forms, scene by scene,
The story of our lives,
And in each breast, is hid, I ween,
Some bliss that aye survives.

Thought oft time's florid pencil adds,
Hues that were not innate,
And in a gorgeous vesture clads,
Joys bred in sordid state.

Adorning by its silent art,
Prosaic bricks and stone,
With graces skill failed to impart.
Charms that are his alone.

Thus we become time's dupes. twice o'er,
Our present loss, or gain ;
The future will make seem the more,
In pleasure, or in pain.

Young Harold then was sure to paint,
Their past in glowing tints ;
Youth's footsteps, howsoever faint,
Time in bright pigments prints.

For when did the sun ever shine,
With such pure golden rays,
Or life seem nearer the divine,
Than in sweet childhood's days ?

But banished now each tender thought!
What sight is that he sees?
The phantom of a brain o'erwrought,
Or only waving trees?

And what is that salutes his ear?
Surely some well known sound,
Since with it comes no thought of fear?
It is his faithful hound!

No noisy mirth does Jason bring,
Straight to his master's side,
At once, he darts, with silent spring,
There patiently to bide.

Like good stag-hound trained to the chase,
Jason knows hunting laws:
To watch his masters hand and face,
And close his noisy jaws.

But Harold has no time to spare,
So through the gate he steals,
Pierces the laurels blooming there,
Which soon his flight conceals;

Then seizing Jason's yielding snout,
Compressed it with both hands,
To signify, beyond a doubt,
That silence he demands.

Now plucking from the oozy ground,
A coarse rank smelling weed ;
On Jason's neck he twines it round,
And hies him forth with speed.

But ere he goes, one magic word.
Whispers he in his ear ;
A name that ever his soul stirred,
Than his own life more dear.

Nor whilst the hound pursues his course,
Will Harold lag behind,
Through tangled brake his way to force,
"The Abbots Walk" to find.

Until by devious path he gains,
The thicket by the lawn,
And there, concealed awhile, remains,
In ambush safe withdrawn.

So cleverly he gained the spot,
Though dense and dark the wood,
That soon he nears the very spot
Whereon the ladder stood.

As they who pierce the mountain,
A new highway to make,
*Unerringly their goal attain,
Though dark the road they take,

* Since writing the foregoing I have picked up the enclosed, which illustrates my meaning with regard to modern tunnelling.

"As illustrating the accuracy of engineering skill, and without entering into lengthy details, suffice it to say that the construction of the tunnel was begun and carried on from both the American and Canadian sides of the river simultaneously, and when the edges of the tunnel shields met midway under the river bed, the total errors in line were found to be *too small for measurement.*"

Harold had so directly bent
His footsteps to this place,
That here he stands, his strength unspent,
Ready the foe to face.

Meanwhile the gale no whit abates ;
The sea mountainous rolls,
Till even earth itself vibrates,
Stormed at through caves and holes.

But now the lightning comes again,
And by its lurid glare
Brightly illumes the ancient fane,
Revealing what is there.

Then flash on flash it quickly plays,
When for the briefest space
The best of nights and worst of days
Seem to meet face to face ;

Whilst clearly can the eye discern
Each leaf upon the lawn,
Each clump of trees, each bank of fern,
Where rests the startled fawn.

Thus Harold plainly sees once more,
Confirming all he feared ;
'Gainst shuttered window and closed door
A ladder is upreared.

Then truly danger threatens now
The home of her he loves,
And Harold, with contracted brow,
Will pause before he moves.

Though not for long; since soon a flash,
More vivid than the rest,
Accompanied by thunder crash
'Twould daunt the stoutest breast,

Shows him each object far and near
Coming within his range:—
That ladder, the prime cause of fear;
Two men, and they both strange.

Besides these signs, a glance reveals
That by the ladder's head
A pale light from the window steals,
No household lamp would shed.

One man close to the window stood,
His ear glued to the pane
As though he sought, in manner rude,
Some knowledge thus to gain.

The other crouches by the shrubs
That form our hero's screen,
So that his shoulder almost rubs
The foliage between.

Passing his arm between the trees
To feel the way is clear,
Harold uprises from his knees,
And to this one draws near.

His left arm now he stretches forth
Above the wretches head,
Whilst his right hand a clod of earth
Grasps, for some purpose dread.

For plain it seemed the fellow there
Watched but to give alarm ;
So must he seize him by the hair,
And to prevent this harm,

Into his filthy jaws he'll thrust
That reeking earthy sop,
For up that ladder go he must,
And none his way may stop.

An instant, only, Harold waits,
Before another gleam
The garden re-illuminates,
Unreal as a dream,

When, midst an awful thunder crash,
He springs upon his foe,
And, vieing the electric flash,
Soon lays the villain low.

Quick, Harold! quick! to yonder room
Ere yet it is too late!
That dim light but reveals the gloom
It fails to dissipate!

Barely three seconds pass until
He mounts with nimble stride,
Climbs on the chamber window-sill,
And darts at once inside.

What was the scene that met his view?
What was it there he found?
A prostrate form with pallid hue,
A stranger hovers round!

He noticed not the odour faint,
Recked not he was unarmed,
But faced the sturdy miscreant,
Now roused, if not alarmed.

So rude the elements had been
The robber had not heard
When Harold came upon the scene,
Nor knew until he stirred.

Then, like a Cretan bull at bay,
Scorning to own defeat,
Determined to dispute his way,
Firmly he plants his feet;

Whilst Harold, as a panther lithe,
Leaps forward to the fray,
His head-long force first makes him writhe,
Then in the end give way.

Now in the villain's strong right hand
Is held a hunting knife,
On which our hero means to stand,
Or capture in the strife,

When fortune smiled on him once more ;
For as the robber fell
His head struck something on the floor,
Which served this purpose well.

With true campaigner's readiness
Advantages to seize,
His rude assailant's helplessness
Young Harold quickly sees.

But consciousness he knows full well
May soon return again,
With what effect no tongue can tell,
If injured be the brain.

Firmly he binds his hand and feet,
Placing him on the bed
And rolling him up in a sheet,
As Egypt did her dead.

And though the task was swiftly done,
'Twas not a bit too soon ;
He reels ! he faints ! his strength quite gone,
Down he falls in a swoon.

The cruel knife the robber grasped,
Had ripped his noble side,
Whence unawares his strength had lapsed,
As flowed the crimson tide.

A moment, nature seemed aghast,
The elements were still,
The thunder, lightning, rain and blast,
Paused ere they worked fresh ill !

But when, alas ! since man's first fall,
Did evil slumber long ?
The leven since pervading all,
How restless and how strong !

The thief, now like some huge cocoon
Swathed in the snow white quilt,
Recovers conciousness full soon,
Waking to further guilt.

A hardy wretch, of courage full,
He scruples not to try,
From off his limbs the wraps to pull,
Intent at once to fly.

And though exhausted by his wound,
He manages to tear,
The bedclothes which ere he had swooned,
Harold wound with such care.

But now the blood streams from his head,
His strength ebbs fast away,
And quickly must he leave the bed
If there he would not stay.

Another effort then he makes
Though it may prove his last,
For vigour now each limb forsakes,
And sight is overcast.

Too late ! too late ! he cannot fly,
Still not yet he succumbs,
Not yet ! not yet ! he can but die
E'en when Nemesis comes.

No, he has not the strength to crawl,
But sinks upon the floor,
When his hand touches in its fall
A thing besmeared with gore.

The lethal weapon he laid down,
When he had knelt to rip,
From the locked bag the jewelled crown,
Cause of this fatal trip.

'Twas this, no doubt, his head had struck,
And his assailants weight,
Had helped, with his accursed luck,
To bring him to this strait.

But not long undisturbed he lies,
For soon a secret door,
Opens, and in the chamber flies,
A hound ! he sees no more !

Surely a carnival of death,
And from the poisoned air,
Fled smiling hope before the breath
Of sigh laden despair !

Following Jason, for 'tis he,
The Lady Alice came,
She straightway falling on her knee,
By Harold, breathes his name.

Then the old Banker and his men,
The great Duke's servants too,
All in haste come hurrying, when
They hear what is to do.

The ancient Butler, placid still,
Though shocked beyond the rest,
Sends messengers for help and skill—
A wide, far-searching quest.

But here, to hark back, must we pause,
 Recalling how the Duke
At once the victim and the cause,
 Of all on which they look :

Leaves the Salon, with time to waste,
 His purpose thus two-fold ;
The banker might not have to haste
 In what had to be told.

Slowly he goes with stately mien
 The corridors along,
Intent to crown sweet Alice, Queen
 Of Harmony and Song.

Gaining at length the chamber door,
 At once he passed inside,
Where soon he lies, stretched on the floor,
 Like one who had just died.

What was the cause of this mishap.
 Few words suffice to tell,
His grace had walked into a trap,
 Laid artfully and well !

In a dark room light from without,
 Illumines those within,
Though oft it only fills with doubt,
 Those who are going in.

The Duke, therefore, not seeing plain,
Assumes that all is right,
And as the door closed to again,
Turns the electric light.

But in that chamber lies concealed,
One from whom God forefend,
Bison the burglar, stands revealed,
In our athletic friend !

'Twas he that from the bag had hoped,
To filch that costly gift !
'Twas he with whom our hero coped,
Now dying without shrift !

His hand it was that seized his Grace.
And spread with fiendish knack
A chloroform pad on his face,
And bore him firmly back !

The Duke then, had not been quite killed
As he had seemed to be ;
But in the hands of those well skilled,
Recovered rapidly.

The noble youth, who shed his blood,
So gallantly ; alas !
In peril, for a time has stood,
So vital was that pass.

As for the thief, they bore him thence,
And in a cottage near,
Life was restored, bereft of sense,
Either to love, or fear.

But worse, alas ! must yet be told,
The Banker had a stroke ;
When, spite of all his cherished gold,
His health completely broke.

Then bowed, at last, that haughty head.
Till the church bell one day,
Told that a spirit had just fled,
Its tenement of clay.

But ere he died his friend the Duke,
Came to see him once more,
When, by his counsel, Alice took,
Her father's countless store.

Nor was this all, before he bade,
The orphan girl adieu,
He told her of the hopes he had :
And of their failure too.

Told, how he learned to love the youth,
Whose prowess saved his life ;
Spoke of that fearlessness and truth :
Worthy of such a wife.

And faithfully he kept his word,
 Coming from Palestine,
To see her wed the brave young Lord ;
 And make his life divine.

And when, in old time's fulness,
 Sweet olive branches came ;
The grand old house of Lyonness,
 Awoke to wealth and fame.

Then, as each scion of that house,
 Was launched on life's full tide ;
The Duke their fortunes would espouse
 Prove patron, friend and guide.

A courtier of the Courtiers,
 Wise unimpassioned, true,
Potent his name in after years,
 To make or to undo.

Nor may we now our story close,
 Without one word of praise ;
To Him from whom each blessing flows,
 Peace, joy and length of days.

Then fear not though the storm fiends rave
 Though blades are bared to kill
His arm may yet be stretched to save
 His voice breathe "Peace be still."

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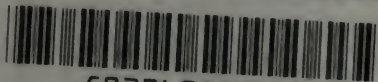
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